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U.S. tries to limit junk food warnings

*Officials worry it may
impede fighting obesity*

BY AZAM AHMED,
MATT RICHTEL
AND ANDREW JACOBS

NEW YORK TIMES

MEXICO CITY – The contentious negotiations over the fate of the North American Free Trade Agreement have veered into one of the world’s most pressing health issues: fighting obesity.

Urged on by big American food and soft-drink companies, the Trump administration is using the trade talks with Mexico and Canada to try to limit the ability of the pact’s three members – including the United States – to warn consumers about the dangers of junk food, according to confidential documents outlining the U.S. position.

The U.S. stance reflects an intensifying battle between trade officials, the food industry and governments across the hemisphere. The administration’s position could help insulate U.S. manufacturers from pressure to include more explicit labels on their products, both abroad and in the United States. But health officials worry that it would also impede international efforts to contain a growing health crisis.

Obesity has at least doubled in 73 countries since 1980. Many public health officials, worried about the rapid spread of highly processed foods, have found hope in a new tactic: the use of vivid warnings on foods with high levels of sugar, salt and fat.

Officials in Mexico and Canada – along with governments in Brazil, Peru, Uruguay, Argentina and Colombia – are discussing options like the use of colors, shapes and other easy-to-understand symbols that warn consumers of health risks. They were inspired in large part by Chile’s introduction of stringent regulations in 2016 that include requirements for black stop-sign warnings on the front of some packages.

But the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative, which is leading the NAFTA talks on the U.S. side, is trying to head off the momentum. It is pushing to limit the ability of any NAFTA member to require consumer warnings on the front of sugary drinks and fatty packaged foods, according to a draft of the proposal reviewed by the New York Times.

The U.S. provision seeks to prevent any warning symbol, shape or color that “inappropriately denotes that a hazard exists from consumption of the food or nonalcoholic beverages.”

Some experts have likened the fight over food labeling to that over tobacco – and the fierce if ultimately unsuccessful

See **NAFTA** on Page A3



Derek Gee/Buffalo News

A NEW WRINKLE IN ELDERCARE

Garden Gate Health Care has beefed up its staff and technology to deliver hospital-level patient care, breaking the cycle of hospital stays and returns to the nursing home. *Story on Page C1*

BUFFALO DIOCESE NAMES PRIESTS ACCUSED OF ABUSING MINORS

“The following list identifies diocesan priests who were removed from ministry, were retired or left ministry after allegations of sexual abuse of a minor,” the diocese said.

JOHN R. AURELIO (2009) • DONALD W. BECKER • DAVID M. BIALKOWSKI
ROBERT J. BIESINGER (2012) • JAMES H. COTTER (1991) • DONALD S. FAFINSKI
DOUGLAS F. FARACI • FRED G. FINGERLE (2002) • MICHAEL R. FREEMAN (2010)
JOSEPH P. FRIEL (1995) • MARK M. FRIEL • THOMAS G. GRESOCK
JOHN P. HAJDUK • MICHAEL J. HARRINGTON (1989) • BRIAN M. HATRICK
JAMES F. HAYES (1988) • LOUIS J. HENDRICKS (1990) • J. GRANT HIGGINS (2016)
FRANCIS T. HOGAN (2010) • FRED D. INGALLS • FLORIAN A. JASINSKI (1983)
GERALD C. JASINSKI • RICHARD P. JUDD (1988) • TIMOTHY J. KELLEY
THOMAS L. KEMP • RICHARD J. KEPPELER (2011) • JOHN D. LEWANDOWSKI (1982)
BERNARD M. MACH (2004) • LOVILLE N. MARTLOCK (2014) • THOMAS J. MCCARTHY
BASIL A. ORMSBY (1997) • NORBERT F. ORSOLITS • MARTIN L. PAVLOCK
ROY K. RONALD (2013) • JOSEPH E. SCHIEDER (1996) • GERARD A. SMYCZYNSKI (1999)
JAMES A. SPIELMAN • CHESTER S. STACHEWICZ • EDWARD J. WALKER (2002)
WILLIAM G. WARD (2008) • WILLIAM F.J. WHITE (2016) • ROBERT W. WOOD

Note: Priests who are deceased have their year of death listed next to their names.

COMMENTARY

To a Catholic, list is only a start to rebuild faith

Like thousands upon thousands in Greater Buffalo, I am a Catholic.

I belong to a parish. I wear a medal around my neck for all it means, as my father did before me. At moments of crisis or sorrow, on a medical gurney or kneeling by a casket, I still make the sign of the cross as a kind of intimate reflex.

I find strength and meaning in the familiar, chanting rhythm of the Mass. I admire – and wish I could better emulate – the many everyday women and men in this community, under the umbrella of the church, who do



Sean Kirst

selfless work on the streets, in the shelters, in the hospitals.

They tend to the hungry and the wounded.

They offer protection or comfort to the lost.

In everything they do, I see their faith pour out like light.

Certainly, I understand why many people I love have drifted away, their impatience with what they see as glacial intransigence on many issues within the church.

I remain Catholic. For all the struggles, it is central to the way I see the world.

See **Kirst** on Page A7

Under growing pressure, bishop releases list of 42 names, including 27 new ones

BY JAY TOKASZ
NEWS STAFF REPORTER

For more than 30 years, Timothy J. Clark lived with the emotional scars of being sexually abused by a parish priest.

The name of the man who allegedly assaulted Clark remained a closely guarded secret. Clark didn’t want to talk much about it. Bishops for the Catholic Diocese of Buffalo refused to acknowledge anything about priests who were accused of molesting minors.

Bishop Richard J. Malone altered course Tuesday morning by disclosing the names of 42 priests facing allegations of sex abuse, including 27 whose names had not previously been linked in public to molestation complaints. The diocese joined about 30 other dioceses in the country that have disclosed the

Inside: FULL COVERAGE OF THE CLERGY ABUSE SCANDAL CONTINUES ON PAGES A6, A7.

names of clergy accused of sexual misconduct.

Among the 27 new names was the Rev. Louis J. Hendricks, the priest who Clark said repeatedly abused him when he was a teenager growing up in South Buffalo in the 1980s.

The stunning list stirred a mix of emotions in Clark, a former altar boy who is now 49 and lives in Alaska.

“It was very surreal seeing Hendricks’ name finally put out there. And it makes me wonder how much did the church know before he got to me,” he said.

Hendricks died in 1990 at

See **Priests** on Page A6

How 40,000 people used a Lockport woman’s Social Security number over four decades

BY STEPHEN T. WATSON
NEWS STAFF REPORTER

078-05-1120.

That’s the most used – or misused – Social Security number in history, and it belonged to a woman from Lockport.

The federal government originally issued that number to Hilda Schrader Whitcher in the 1930s. But over the next four decades more than 40,000 people mistakenly claimed it for themselves.

How and why that happened is an

intriguing story told by various media outlets over the years, most recently last week on National Public Radio’s “Planet Money” podcast.

The Social Security Administration even devotes a page on its website to Whitcher’s number.

It all began in 1938, when Whitcher’s employer, the E.H. Ferree Co., a maker of leather goods based in Lockport, wanted to boost sales of its wallets. The company thought it would help to show customers how they

See **Number** on Page A3



A photo of Hilda Whitcher ran in The Buffalo News in 1983, when she was interviewed about her famous Social Security number.

Buffalo News archives via the Niagara County Historical Society

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